

## **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The Office Action of July 29, 2003, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1-17 and 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over either the patent to Komai, the patent to Savage, Jr., in view of either the patent to Chang et al. or the patent to Lin '000.

Claims 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over either Komai or Savage, Jr., in view of either Chang et al. or Lin, and further in view of the patent to Lin '329.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 22.

It should be mentioned that the independent claims now on file specifically define a lighting device for a LED arrangement having LED elements arranged one behind another, and a respective plastic housing containing each LED element. Each housing surrounds the LED and the conductor strip, and is comprised of a first shell and a second shell. The first shell is configured to hold a respective LED element, at least one electrically conductive contact at the LED element in the housing and an axial direction conductor strip area of the conductor strip.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims now on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions disclosed in the references.

The object of the present invention is to provide a structure that is simplified both as to its construction and operation compared to prior art structures.

Turning now to the references, and particularly to the patent to Komai, it can be seen that this patent discloses a typical prior art lamp holder for an LED element. Unlike Applicant's claim 1, the Komai LED element is not held by a plastic housing that surrounds the conductor strip near each LED element, and that it is at least partly light-emitting. Furthermore, Komai fails to teach a housing having two shells, one of which is configured to hold and holds a respective LED element, at least one electrically conductive contact at the LED element in the housing, and an axial conductor strip area, while the other shell is a top shell secured to the first shell by sealing means between the two shells.

Komai teaches a lamp holding structure which comprises oppositely disposed bed 15 and cover 13 sections which are hinged on each other so that the structure can be opened to allow the insertion of feed wires thereby causing interconnection of a lighting device and an optional resistor 71 with the feed wires by forcing a plurality of interior contact elements to penetrate into the feed wires. As shown in Figure 8, a lighting device with an LED element 114 with an integral resistor is provided wherein the lighting device is inserted into a lamp holder 111. These LED elements 114 can be connected in series along the feed wires. This is a conventional prior art construction.

Savage, Jr. also teaches essentially the same type of construction as discussed above in connection with Komai. Savage, Jr. regards a clamping apparatus 10 producing an electrical connection, comprising a lower clamping body element 25 and an upper clamping body element 28.

Further, first zones 29 receive electrical wires 12 and a second zone 30 receives electrical leads 20, 21 defined between the clamping elements. The two zones are connected with each other by electrical terminal elements. The clamping elements can be moved relative to each other so that the feed wires are clamped to the terminal elements in the first zone and so that the electrical lead structure is clamped relative to the terminal structure. Furthermore, the lead structure may typically contain two-spaced parallel metallic leads 20, 21 and an LED holder 22 in the form of a block. The two leads project from the block into the apparatus 10 and the LED holder itself carries a light source, for example, an LED element.

The Examiner combines either Komai or Savage, Jr. with either Chang et al. or Lin '000 in rejecting claims 1-17 and 21-24. Applicant respectfully submits that these combinations of references argued by the Examiner do not teach the invention recited in the claims presently on file. Chang et al. disclose a set of fancy lamp bulbs and a socket adapter, while Lin discloses a decorative lamp strip. Applicant respectfully submits that there is nothing in either of these references which suggests modification of either Komai or Savage, Jr. to arrive at the presently claimed invention. The combination does not teach or suggest a lighting device having LED elements arranged one behind the other in a row, wherein each LED element is arranged in a respective housing that surrounds the conductor strip at and around the LED element, as in the

presently claimed invention. Furthermore, the combination does not teach such a housing which surrounds the conductor strip, wherein the housing has a first shell configured to hold and holding the respective LED elements, at least one conductive contact with the LED element in an axial direction conductor strip area of the conductor strip, and a second shell that is fixed to the first shell by sealing means, as in the presently claimed invention. Not only does the combination of references not teach these features, Applicant respectfully submits that there is nothing in the teachings of any of the references which would suggest modifying the constructions of either Komai or Savage, Jr. based upon the teachings of Chang et al. or Lin to arrive at the presently claimed invention. Without at least some suggestion for making the modifications argued by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully submits that it is not obvious to combine the teachings thereof to arrive at the present invention.

In view of these considerations, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-17 and 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over various combinations of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

The additional Lin reference '329 has also been considered. Since this reference does not come closer to the currently claimed subject matter than the references discussed above, it is believed that any detailed comments thereon at this time would be superfluous. Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Lin '329 with the various combinations argued by the Examiner against the independent claims as discussed above, adds nothing to these references which would lead to the invention recited in the claims presently on file. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is overcome and should be withdrawn.

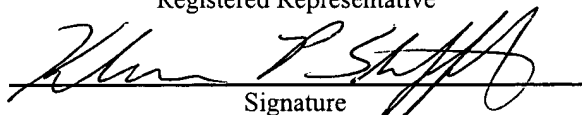
Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

In the event the actual fee is greater than the payment submitted or is inadvertently not enclosed or if any additional fee during the prosecution of this application is not paid, the Patent Office is authorized to charge the underpayment to Deposit Account No. 15-0700.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on October 22, 2003:

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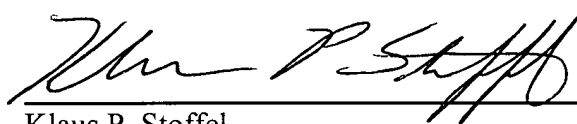
  
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Respectfully submitted,



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